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analyser; and in the beautiful adaptations and contrivances which he everywhere discovered in creation, he devoutly recognised the care which the Maker has exercised for all his creatures, and the wisdom which presides in every department of the universe. So fully did the artist prove himself the naturalist, that, as his biographer remarks, "his leaves and reptiles, and other rustic designs, are so copied, in form and colour, with minute accuracy, that the species of each can be determined accurately. There has been found scarcely a fancy leaf, and not one lizard, butterfly, or beetle, not one bit of nature transferred to the works of Palissy, which does not belong to the rocks, woods, rivers, and seas of France."

We have been so intent on watching the experiments which were carried on by Palissy, that we have not even cast a glance at the affairs of the outer world. Thus it was that Palissy himself would fain have lived; forgetting in his study of nature and his researches in art the sorrows and distractions of his native land. All minor factions were then being merged in the two great parties of Catholic and Huguenot. And as Palissy stood in the light of his glowing furnace, his soul had burned within him at the thought, that other fires were being kindled in France, not for purposes of science or of art, but in the vain attempt to purge the land from "heresy." But while he sought to keep aloof from scenes of suffering in which he could neither restrain wrong-doers, nor protect the weak, he yet fearlessly asserted in his own person the right of free speech and free action. We have a touching chronicle from his own modest pen of the first Reformed Church of Saintes: "A certain artisan, marvellously poor and indigent," already known to us as a diligent and reverent student of the Book of Nature, met daily with "another as poor as himself," to search the pages of that other divine volume, the Book of Life. The small beginning grew; the "little one" became a "thousand," and after a time Saintes was largely leavened with the purifying doctrines of the Gospel. Sometimes the members of the little church stole at dead of night to the secret rendezvous; but the days grew brighter, and, as Palissy tells us, the fields and groves of Saintes echoed with the sweet voices of virgins "who delighted to sing of all holy things."

The storm came at last, however. It swept over Saintes, and Palissy's home did not escape. He was seized at night, and hurried to a dungeon.

If this had happened in the days of unsuccessful toil, Palissy's name would have been quickly entered in God's Book of Martyrs; but his noble patrons could not afford to let his beautiful art perish. The works which he had in progress for the Constable Montmorencie and the Duc de Montpensier would have come to an abrupt termination if the hand of the cunning workman had been suffered to grow cold in death. Palissy was appointed "Inventor of Rustic Figulines to the King and the Constable," and was, of course, immediately set at liberty. This was in the year 1562, the date of the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

Another year or two the potter carried on the practice of his art at Saintes, and then removed to Paris. The Palace of the Tuileries was then in course of erection for Catherine de Medecis, and he was employed in its decoration. All that we know of the remaining years of his life in the licentious capital is highly interesting. Collecting around him such lovers of science and literature as could be found in the precincts of Henry the Third's riotous court, he delivered a course of lectures, in which he propounded his discoveries in science, his own rich collection of specimens serving him for illustration. He continued this practice for many years, and in 1580 published some of these lectures, together with a treatise on agriculture. Two other volumes from his pen had before, at intervals of some years, issued from the press. The first, a medical treatise, is lost; the others which remain prove Palissy to have been far in advance of his age, and establish his claim to many discoveries in chemistry, geology, and natural history.

During his years of court favour, as in his rustic retirement, the Huguenot potter fearlessly avowed his religious opinions. It was the fashion to patronise "poor Master Bernard, of the

Tuileries," and for a long while he stood unharmed. But in the year 1585, a royal edict was issued which made death the penalty of exercising the Reformed faith. The noble old man, then seventy-six years of age, had served the crown for forty years, but was forced to abandon for the Bastille the laboratory which his genius had enriched with gems of art. Yet, even the rude hands which spared not tender virgins, hesitated to strike Palissy. He had passed three years within those gloomy walls when he received, one day, a visit from the king.

"My good man," said Henry, "you have been forty-five years in the service of the queen, my mother, or in mine, and we have suffered you to live in your own religion, amidst all the executions and the massacres. Now, however, I am so pressed by the Guise party and my people, that I have been compelled, in spite of myself, to imprison these two poor women [fair girls—guilty of heresy] and you; they are to be burnt to-morrow, and you also if you will not be converted."

"Sire," answered the old man, "the Count de Maulverier came yesterday, on your part, promising life to the two sisters They replied, that they would now be martyrs for their own honour, as well as for the honour of God. You have said several times that you feel pity for me; but it is I who pity you, who have said, 'I am compelled.' That is not speaking like a king. These girls and I, who have part in the kingdom of heaven, we will teach you to talk royally. The Guisarts, all your people, and yourself, cannot compel a potter to bow down to images of clay."

The sisters were burned as the king had said, but Palissy was spared the fiery trial. After four years of captivity he died in the Bastille.

With the potter perished his beautiful art. Two sons survived him; but the genius which presided in his laboratory had departed with Bernard Palissy.

THE POET'S MISSION.

BY W. J. LINTON.

"The Poet's mission
Is but prophetic vision:
To him the daring heart is granted—
Not the hand."

From the German of Herwegh.

Learn higher apprehending
Of the Poet's task!
To him are God and Nature lending
Ore of mighty thought,
That for such use as the world's need may ask,
Fit iron may be wrought.

The passionate impulse furnaced
In the Poet's heart
Must weld stern work and action earnest:
Poet word and deed
In harmony: that he may take God's part,
And earn a true life's meed.

Clear vision ever lendeth
Faith to his life:
Then only he his mission comprehendeth,
When he can wield his soul
Or to creative thought or the daily strife,
With artist-like control.

Not in the purer heaven
Of his own thought
To dwell, enparadised, to him was given
The poet-fire:
But that a grander, truer life be wrought,
The world exemplified higher.

Not only do God's angels
Behold him with clear eyes:
But day and night they speed his dread evangel
Over the world;
Their seraph-wings of act and sacrifice
Eternally unfurl'd.